Reviewer’s report

Title: Perceptions of healthcare professionals regarding the main challenges and barriers to effective hospital infection control in Mongolia: a qualitative study.

Version: 1 Date: 7 March 2012

Reviewer: Michael Borg

Reviewer’s report:

Good quality research on infection prevention & control in developing and low resource countries is extremely lacking in the literature. It is therefore a pleasure to be asked to review this manuscript. The questions posed by the authors is well defined and, most critically, the methods are very appropriate and well described. The data is sound and very well presented. The title and abstract accurately convey the findings and the article is written in good English.

1. Unfortunately, I found the discussion and conclusions to be less balanced and incongruent with the preceding sections. Readers who will access this article are not likely to be specifically interested in the situation in Mongolia but rather want to use it as a reference on infection control in developing countries. It would therefore be important for the discussion to focus on a critical evaluation of the findings in the light of already available literature from other countries and attempt to extrapolate conclusions that would be applicable to similar low resource environments.

2. The discussion also lacks a comprehensive assessment of the limitations of the work. It is common for healthcare workers in developing countries to attribute the lack of resources to sub-optimal infection control activity. However publications suggest that even when those resources are provided, improvement is far from automatic because ownership and accountability remain absent. A more in depth assessment of these issues would do justice to the paper.

I look forward to reviewing the paper following these amendments.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests